Name of the Member States	Assessed share of foodgrains (in tons)
Afghanistan	1420
Bangladesh	40,000
Bhutan	180
India	1,53,200
Maldives	200
Nepal	4,000
Pakistan	40,000
Sri Lanka	4,000
TOTAL:	2,43,000

(c) Based on the Colombo Statement on Food Security adopted in the Fifteenth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi on 2-3 August, 2008, SAARC Food Bank has been operationalised. In the Second meeting of the SAARC Food Bank Board held in Colombo, 12-13 February, 2009, the SAARC Food Bank Board has agreed for transacting it business in terms of drawal of food grains by Member States from their own reserves as well as from reserves of other Member States. As provided under articles VI and VIII of the Agreement on establishing the SAARC Food Bank, in case of food emergencies a member country may withdraw foodgrains from its own assessed reserve by intimating other members and from shares of other member countries by approaching them.

Allocation of PDS rice to Kerala

166. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has approached the Central Government recently for higher allocation of PDS rice to Kerala and special assistance for supporting cash crops; and

(b) if so, the details in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) A request from Kerala Government has been received in June, 2009 for allocation of 1.13 lakh tons of APL rice which was the level of such allocation during 2006-07. The State Government of Kerala also requested in March, 2009 for sanction of enhanced financial assistance for replantation programme for natural rubber.

Import of edible oil

167. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's unsatiated demand for edible oils has once again set global oil market

on fire by an ever growing demand for the cooking medium from India which led to jump in country's edible oil imports to 34.34 lakh tonnes between November, 2008 and March, 2009, the crude palm oil prices in international market jumped to $800 per tonne in April;

(b) if so, what is quantity of oil imported till January, 2009 and what steps Government proposes to take to reduce import of edible oil;

(c) whether Government is considering measures to produce edible oil in the country itself to meet demand; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) The world export of edible oils during 2007-08 (Oct.-Sept.) was 608 lakh tons out of which the export of these oils to India was about 10% (Oil World Annual Report' 2009). Therefore, influence of India's import of edible oils on international prices would be limited to that extent.

The domestic production is unable to meet the demand for edible oils in the country. The gap between demand and supply is met through imports. During the current oil year (November, 2008—March, 2009), the total import of edible oils is reported to be 34.34 lakh tons as compared to 19.34 lakh tons during the same period last year.

(b) to (c) Import of edible oils from November, 2008 to January 2009 was 20.95 lakh tons. In the year 2008-09, the deficit of edible oils is about 66 lakh tons, which has to be met through imports to ensure adequate availability. The Government has taken various steps to enhance the production and productivity of oilseeds in the country. A centrally sponsored Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) is being implemented in 14 major oilseeds growing States for increasing production. The States like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat etc. are implementing the Oilpalm Development Programme under ISOPOM.

Under the Scheme, financial assistance is provided for purchase of breeder seed, production of foundation seed, production and distribution of certified seed, distribution of seed minikits, distribution of plant protection chemicals, plant protection equipments, weedicides, gypsum/pyrite/lime/dolomite, distribution of sprinkler sets and water carrying pipes, training, publicity etc. to encourage farmers to grow these crops. Block demonstrations and Integrated Pest Management demonstrations are organized through State Department of Agriculture and ICAR. A Budget of Rs.320 crore has been kept for 2009-10 for ISOPOM Scheme.

(d) Does not arise

Financial assistance to Andhra Pradesh for Rs. 2 a kilo rice scheme

168. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested for financial assistance for Rs. 2 per kilo rice scheme which is popular in Andhra Pradesh;